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Geographic Influences in American History. By ALBERT PERRY BRIGHAM, A.M., F.G.S.A., Professor in Colgate University. (Boston: Ginn and Company. 1903. Pp. xiv, 366.)

American History and its Geographic Conditions. By ELLEN CHURCHILL SEMPLE. (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company. 1903. Pp. iv, 466.)

THOUGH geography is well known to be the handmaid of history, their relations are too little noticed by experts in either subject. A few books, notably Hinsdale's *How to Study and Teach History*, have sought to connect the face of the country with the course of its history; but the two books upon this subject which lie upon our table are welcome additions. Professor Brigham writes from the point of view of the geologist, but of the geologist who concerns himself not simply with the face of the country and the manner in which it has been carved out, nor with the geological materials and minerals useful to man which are under the earth. He treats topography as a basis of production; hence he discusses climates, soils, and crops. His very chapter-titles suggest that he looks upon the face of the country as a region habitable by man and interesting because of that human occupancy: "Shore-line and Hilltop in New England", "Cotton, Rice, and Cane", "Where Little Rain Falls". His method is to sweep over the country from east to west, describing the salient features, and then showing how far they have affected the course of settlement, of the growth of population, and of military movement. For instance, after describing the Hudson and Mohawk valleys and their geographical history, he tells of the Iroquois and their position athwart the natural highway from east to west; of the coming of the Dutch and the English; of the Dutch, German, and English place-names; of the importance of the Hudson valley in the Revolution as an avenue for British armies and as a bridge from New England to the middle states. Then he describes the opening up of the Erie Canal and the New York Central and West Shore railroads in recent times.

Throughout this vigorous and suggestive book we find such interesting combinations of what is and what has been that one's circle of knowledge is easily and simply enlarged. The book is attractively illustrated with typical bits of scenery, mountains, cliffs, rocky sea-coast, rivers, lakes, forests, harbors, towns, and cities. The live-oak, the river steamer, the orange orchard, and the snow-shed supplement the mountain trail; the desert and the cañon illustrate the larger American geography. Serviceable maps, several of them in relief, bring clearly to the mind the topographic basis of the whole. To be sure, Professor Brigham makes history rather the handmaid of geography; yet the book is a study of the effect of environment upon national character and development, and as such deserves to be read and pondered by the economist and sociologist as well as by the historian.

Miss Semple's book is larger, more ambitious, and more distinctly historical. Beginning with the geography of western Europe, she takes up the effect of the North American rivers, then of the Appalachian barrier, then of the interior, and so extends her geographic description according to the historical advance of the frontier, rather than by a pre-determined geological system. She has seized upon the idea set forth in Thwaites's books, that a key to early American exploration and settlement is to be found in the portages; and by useful sketch-maps and description she brings out the importance of various passes and navigable streams. For instance, she makes clear once for all why it was that Kentucky was settled by a trail leading across the head waters of the Tennessee. She has constantly in mind not so much the face of the country as the movement of people across it, a movement directed by the natural features and often circumscribed by them.

A large part of the book is a study of the arrival and distribution of foreign elements and the determinants of urban and rural settlement. To a much larger degree than Professor Brigham, Miss Semple concerns herself with the human element, with man upon the land, with artificial highways, roads, canals, and railroads. It is a book extremely useful to those who have been in the habit of thinking of their country in the flat, of seeing on the map only artificial subdivisions which you cross over as you travel, without being aware of them. She takes America as a part of the earth surface, connected rather than divided by great oceans, with lands to the eastward and to the westward. For that understanding of the history of the western United States which has become essential the book is especially valuable. A fair example of her conception is the term "American Mediterranean", which she applies to the Gulf of Mexico, or the chapter on "The United States as a Pacific Ocean Power". A task so ambitious requires for success a greater grasp both of conditions and of historic development than any one person can be expected to possess.

To compare the two books, Professor Brigham's is the work of an expert scientific man who loves the face of his country and who wants his countrymen to see how much it affects national life. Miss Semple's book is much less precise and authoritative, but it brings together for the service of the student and the general reader a wealth of material hitherto unclassified and often unavailable, upon the function of man in overcoming the obstacles which nature set to the occupation of this continent.

ALBERT BUSHNELL HART.

Historic Highways of America. By ARCHER BUTLER HULBERT. Vol. VII., Portage Paths: the Keys of the Continent; Vol. IX., Waterways of Westward Expansion: the Ohio River and its Tributaries. (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company. 1903. Pp. 194; 220.)

Few will question that portage paths are of sufficient importance as connecting links in American highways to deserve a special volume in